

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed September 7, 2007. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and pending claims are respectfully requested.

I. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 10, 16, 17, 24, 25, 27, and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Okada, et al.* ("Okada," U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0138964). Applicant respectfully traverses.

It is axiomatic that "[a]nticipation requires the disclosure in a single prior art reference of each element of the claim under consideration." *W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1554, 220 U.S.P.Q. 303, 313 (Fed. Cir. 1983). Therefore, every claimed feature of the claimed invention must be represented in the applied reference to constitute a proper rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

In the present case, not every feature of the claimed invention is represented in the Okada reference. Applicant discusses the Okada reference and Applicant's claims in the following.

A. The Okada Disclosure

Okada discloses a program that controls a computer 30 such that, when an amount of ink remaining in an ink cartridge of a printer 10 is equal to or below a threshold, a screen inviting a user to purchase a new ink cartridge is displayed. *Okada*, paragraph 0002.

As is further described by Okada, the program attempts to obtain from the operating system of the computer 30 country information. *Okada*, paragraph 0065. When the country information is obtained, it is presented to the user for selection. *Okada*, paragraph 0067. Once the user selects the country, the program obtains a URL corresponding to that country, which can be later selected to take the user to a screen at which an ink cartridge for sale in that country can be purchased. *Okada*, paragraphs 0071 and 0083.

B. Applicant's Claims

As is noted above, Okada fails to teach several of Applicant's claim limitations. Applicant discusses some of those claim limitations in the following.

1. Claims 1-5, 7, and 8

Applicant's independent claim 1 provides as follows:

1. A method for implementing device regionalization, comprising:

identifying with a printer a region code stored on a component installed within the printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region; and

locking a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer.

Regarding claim 1, Okada does not teach "identifying with a printer a region code stored on a component installed within the printer, the region code identifying a

particular geographical region". As described above, Okada describes a program that *executes on a computer 30* determining country information *from an operating system of the computer*. Therefore, Okada's country information is not identified "with a printer" and further is not identified from a region code "stored on a component installed within the printer". Applicant acknowledges that Okada identifies a "print system 1" that includes a "computer 30" and a separate "printer 10." However, although the country information can be said to be determined with the Okada's "print system 1," it certainly cannot be said that the information is determined with Okada's "printer 10."

With further regard to claim 1, Okada also does not teach "locking a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer". Although Okada describes presenting the user with a screen with which an ink cartridge *may* be purchased, nothing described by Okada can be said to comprise "locking" Okada's printer 10 "such that *only* components intended for sale in that geographical region *can be used with* the printer". Regarding the Examiner's argument that paragraph 0085 of the Okada reference indicates that "once URL region is set user is allowed to make purchases only according to the geographical region is initialized," Applicant disagrees. That paragraph provides as follows:

When the printer utility section 312 receives a click on the "Online purchase" button 503 in the ink monitor screen 500, it notifies the Web browser section 320 of the URL of the Web page for requesting a consumable item purchase. Then, the Web browser section 320 accesses the Web page for requesting the consumable item purchase, whereby the user can make online request for purchasing the ink cartridge. A URL which is set at the time of installation process of the printer utility program 90 is used as the URL of the Web page for requesting for the consumable item purchase.

Okada, paragraph 0085. As can be readily appreciated from the above excerpt, *Okada* only describes facilitating a user to purchase a given ink cartridge from a particular web page when the user clicks on the "Online purchase" button 503. As described by *Okada* in paragraph 0005, such facilitation increases the "smoothness in procedure and convenience in delivery and the like of the purchase process." *Okada*, paragraph 0005. Such facilitation clearly does not however prevent the user from purchasing the ink cartridge elsewhere (e.g., from another web site) or from using an ink cartridge intended for sale in another geographical region with the printer 10. Nothing in paragraph 0085 indicates that such an alternative ink cartridge *cannot be used with* the printer. Accordingly, it is clear that the disclosure of paragraph 0085 does not describe a scenario in which a printer is "locked" such that "*only* components intended for sale in that geographical region *can be used with* the printer".

In view of the above, claim 1 and its dependents are clearly allowable over the *Okada* reference.

2. Claim 10

Applicant's independent claim 10 provides as follows:

10. A computer-readable memory that stores a system for implementing device regionalization that executes on a printer, the system comprising:

means provided on the printer for reading a region code embedded within a device component installed within the printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region; and

means provided on the printer for locking a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer.

Regarding claim 10, Okada does not describe any system for implementing device regionalization that executes "on a printer". As discussed above in relation to claim 1, Okada's "program" clearly executes on Okada's computer 30, not Okada's printer 10.

Okada further does not teach "means provided on the printer for reading a region code embedded within a device component installed within the printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region". As described above, although Okada describes obtaining country information from an operating system of the computer 30, no such information is read from a component "installed with the printer" and, therefore, there are no means "provided on the printer" for reading that information.

Furthermore, Okada does not teach "means provided on the printer for locking a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region

code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer” at least for reasons described above. Again, although Okada facilitates purchase of an ink cartridge from a preferred source, such facilitation does not comprise “locking” of the printer such that “only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer”.

In view of the above, claim 10 is clearly allowable over the Okada reference.

3. Claims 16 and 17

Applicant’s independent claim 16 provides as follows:

16. A computer-readable storage medium that stores:
logic for reading a region code from a device component installed in a printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region;
logic configured to store the read region code within printer memory; and
logic configured to provide the stored region code to a device driver that executes on a user computer.

Regarding claim 16, Okada does not teach “logic for reading a region code from a device component installed in a printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region” at least for reasons described in the foregoing.

Okada further does not teach “logic configured to store the read region code within printer memory”. As described above, Okada’s country information is stored on Okada’s computer 30, not Okada’s printer 10.

In view of the above, claims 16 and 17 are clearly allowable over the Okada reference.

4. Claims 24 and 25

Applicant's independent claim 24 provides as follows:

24. A printer, comprising:
a processing device; and
memory including a region identification system that is configured to read a region code from an encoded component installed within the printer, the region code identifying a particular geographical region, and to lock a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer.

Regarding claim 24, Okada does not teach a "printer" that comprises any "region identification system". As described above, Okada only describes identifying country information from a computer operating system on Okada's computer 30.

Furthermore, Okada does not teach a printer, or other component, comprising a region identification system that is configured to "read a region code from an encoded component installed within the printer" or to "lock a geographical region for the printer to be the geographical region identified by the region code such that only components intended for sale in that geographical region can be used with the printer" at least for reasons described in the foregoing.

In view of the above, claims 24 and 25 are clearly allowable over the Okada reference.

5. Claims 27 and 28

Applicant's independent claim 27 provides as follows (emphasis added):

27. A computer-readable storage medium that stores a driver comprising:

a component identification module that is configured to receive a region code from a printer that is controlled by the device driver, the region code identifying a particular geographical region, to access a database using the region code a device model to determine the components that pertain to the geographical region and the printer and therefore are available for use with the printer, and to identify the determined components to a device user.

Regarding claim 27, Okada does not teach a driver that is configured to "receive a region code from a printer". As described above, although Okada describes obtaining country information from an operating system of Okada's computer 30, no such information is received "from a printer".

In view of the above, claims 24 and 25 are clearly allowable over the Okada reference.

II. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Rejection of Claims 3 and 4

Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Okada* in view of *Walker, et al.* ("Walker," U.S. Pat. No. 6,494,562). Applicant respectfully traverses.

As identified above, Okada does not teach aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Walker does not remedy the deficiencies of the Okada reference, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3 and 4 are allowable over the Okada/Walker combination for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable over Okada.

B. Rejection of Claims 6, 15, 18, and 26

Claims 6, 15, 18, and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Okada* in view of *Hopper, et al.* ("Hopper," U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0071726). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

As identified above, Okada does not teach aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Hopper does not remedy the deficiencies of the Okada reference, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6, 15, 18, and 26 are allowable over the Okada/Hopper combination for at least the same reasons that claims 1, 10, 16, and 24 are allowable over Okada.

C. Rejection of Claims 9, 12, and 19

Claims 9, 12, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Okada* in view of *Maehara* (U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0125393). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

As identified above, Okada does not teach aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Maehara does not remedy the deficiencies of the Okada reference, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 9, 12, and 19 are allowable over the Okada/Maehara combination for at least the same reasons that claims 1, 10, and 16 are allowable over Okada.

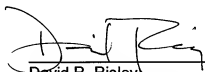
III. Canceled Claims

Claims 2, 5, 11, 13, 14, and 20-23 have been canceled from the application without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to present these canceled claims, or variants thereof, in continuing applications to be filed subsequently.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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